

MORGAN COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2023



734 Barlow Road
P.O. Box 738
Fort Morgan, CO 80701



970-867-5688



customerservice@mcrea.org



www.mcrea.org



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MCREA Mission

Morgan County REA, a member-owned cooperative, is dedicated to serving our members by providing safe, reliable energy with a strong tradition and vision for the future.

■ This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: ENSURING RESOURCE ADEQUACY

BY DAVID FRICK GENERAL MANAGER



DAVID FRICK

Reliable electricity is not just something you expect — it's something we all depend on. Here at Morgan County REA, we are committed to doing everything we can to ensure we are able to provide you with a constant supply of electricity.

From California to Texas, we have all seen headlines and heartbreaking consequences of the failures of America's electric grid. Each story and the people impacted reinforce just how crucial a reliable supply of electricity is.

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation recently reported in its 2022–2023 Winter Reliability Assessment that much of the U.S. is at risk of “insufficient electricity supplies” during peak winter conditions. Fortunately for us, the report also shows that our region of the country is strongly positioned to weather extreme peak demand scenarios, and here at MCREA we do not foresee any impacts to our reliability this winter.

However, we cannot stop there. As the electric industry evolves, MCREA makes every effort to maintain the reliability we have all come to expect. One major risk to grid reliability stems from current legislative and regulatory environments in Colorado. The legislature has mandated an energy transition that will shut down hundreds of megawatts of dispatchable resources, such as coal and natural gas power plants, replacing them with intermittent resources, such as solar and wind farms, by the end of this decade. This transition, in and of itself, is not a problem, but it does require that every utility engage in a thorough planning process to carefully implement these changes without impacting grid reliability.

Our electric grid is like a perfectly balanced seesaw, where the amount of electricity being produced must match the amount of electricity that consumers want to

use at that moment. Every utility in the state has an impact on the reliability of our grid, and as dispatchable generators are replaced with renewable resources that cannot be controlled in the same way, proper planning is all the more important.

The term “resource adequacy” refers to making sure there is enough electricity to meet the needs of consumers at all times and under any conditions. Along with electric co-ops and other utilities across the state, we are working to help draft resource adequacy legislation to ensure that all utility providers in Colorado are held accountable for their ability to deliver reliable electricity.

You have the opportunity to join us in safeguarding the reliability of our electric grid while we work through a national energy transition. We will be activating our grassroots network in the coming months, giving you the chance to make your voice heard on this vital resource adequacy legislation. It is likely that we will need your help to get this across the finish line at the Colorado state legislature.

If you have not already done so, I ask you to please sign up for MCREA's grassroots program by visiting mcrea.org/GrassrootsSignup.

As a member-owned cooperative, we have a duty to deliver reliable and affordable electricity, and we will not sit idly by if our ability to do so is threatened. MCREA remains steadfast in our mission and will continue to advocate for you, our members, and the reliable, affordable energy you expect and deserve.

SAVE BIG IN 2023 WITH AN AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMP

BY ROB BARANOWSKI MANAGER OF MEMBER SERVICES

With stories of climbing natural gas and propane prices appearing in the news almost daily, looking for ways to take control and cut back on high heating bills could be nearing the top of your to-do list as we enter the winter months.

You may be considering replacing an older furnace on its last leg, or maybe you've chosen next summer as the time to finally upgrade your worn-out AC that's no longer able to keep up with summer cooling.

Maybe you're exploring ways to increase comfort or savings by switching from electric baseboard heat to something more affordable and consistent but don't have any existing ductwork or the room to run new ducts. Building a new home? You may be looking for the most economical HVAC solution that attains high indoor air quality and very low operating costs.

If any of these scenarios apply to you, now could be the perfect time to consider installing an air-source heat pump. ASHPs are capable of both heating and cooling, and on average can cost 20% to 70% less to run than electric baseboard heat or a propane furnace. ASHPs can even provide heating and cooling in homes without existing ductwork. They are basically the jack of all trades when it comes to heating and cooling.

Colorado's electric cooperatives have a reputation of staying current on trends in innovation and energy efficiency. Recent industry studies, including a pilot program installation of three cold climate ASHPs in the Frasier area, have shown tremendous gains in ASHP efficiency in just the last few years. While older heat pumps installed over the last couple decades could only provide heat in temperatures of 35 to 40 degrees, technology advancements have allowed many systems to operate efficiently when temperatures are 5 degrees or below.



▲ Air-source heat pumps are an innovative and economical HVAC solution.

The best part? Morgan County REA offers substantial rebates on ASHPs. The number of MCREA members applying for available rebates of between \$675 and \$2,400, depending on size and unit efficiency, has steadily grown throughout the past year. (Nick Vallejo, acct. #xxx9400) With new federal and state tax credits of 30% and 10% respectively becoming available starting in January 2023, now could be a great time to try out this new heating (and cooling) technology. In some instances, bundling the available rebates and tax incentives can almost entirely cover the equipment cost. Be sure to contact your tax professional regarding tax incentive eligibility.


So, what are you waiting for? Consider reaching out to your HVAC professional today. Now may be the perfect time to install an ASHP to take advantage of savings, installation incentives and increased comfort in your home.

As of January 1, Morgan County REA now offers rebates on

EVAPORATIVE WATER COOLERS & AIR CONDITIONERS

Learn more at mcrea.org/energy-efficiency-rebates

**NEW YEAR
NEW
REBATES**



MORGAN COUNTY REA

MORGAN COUNTY REA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 17

Through partnerships with Tri-State G&T and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Morgan County REA is once again proudly sponsoring a total of nine college or vocational scholarships for students who reside within MCREA's service territory, and whose family (parents or grandparents) receives electric service from MCREA. For the 2022–2023 school year, MCREA will award five \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors and one \$1,000 scholarship to a current postsecondary student who will be returning to college or trade school. Tri-State will award two \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative will award one \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior.


Completed application materials must be submitted by **Friday, February 17**. (Curtis

Baumgartner, acct. xxx5600) This year, applications will be available and submitted in an online format. Visit mcrea.org/scholarship-application to complete and submit your application. Only one set of application materials is necessary to apply for scholarships from all three cooperatives.

Those applying for the \$1,000 scholarship awarded to a current college or trade school student do not need to be previous MCREA scholarship winners to qualify.

More information regarding these scholarship opportunities can be found on MCREA's website at mcrea.org/college-scholarships. If you have any questions regarding MCREA scholarship opportunities, please call the member services department at 970-867-5688 or email memberservices@mcrea.org.




 Rylee Givens, Fort Morgan, a 2022 scholarship recipient.



MORGAN COUNTY REA AWARDS YEARS OF SERVICE PINS TO EMPLOYEES

At the Morgan County REA Christmas party last month, the co-op recognized a number of its employees with Years of Service pins. Each of these individuals is an important part of the MCREA team and dedicated to serving the co-op's 4,800-plus members. Congratulations to the following:

- Travis Kallweit – 5 years
- Robb Shaver – 10 years
- Dean Segelke – 25 years
- Kevin Martens – 25 years
- Bobby Brenton – 25 years

 MCREA employees receiving their Years of Service pins (left to right): Robb Shaver, Dean Segelke, Kevin Martens, and Lisa Brenton, accepting on behalf of her late husband, Bobby. (Not pictured: Travis Kallweit.)

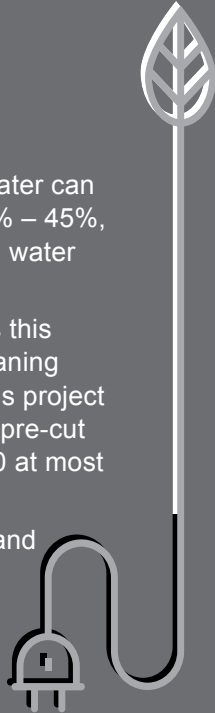
Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Insulating your electric water heater can reduce standby heat loss by 25% – 45%, saving you 7% – 16% on annual water heating costs.

The Department of Energy rates this project as medium difficulty, meaning most homeowners can tackle this project on their own. You can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets for about \$20 at most home improvement stores.

Visit energy.gov for project tips and additional considerations.

Source: energy.gov



KEEP SAFE AND WARM THIS WINTER



When the chill of fall and winter set in, be aware of **potential fire hazards that are lurking in your home**. Whether keeping warm with heat from your furnace, space heater, fireplace, or electric blanket, **Safe Electricity offers these tips to prevent a fire in your home:**

Always place your space heater on a **steady surface** and away from curtains, tablecloths or other flapping fabrics. Use a space heater with an automatic shut-off switch.



Have your furnace inspected annually.



Inspect electric blankets for scorch marks or visible damage regularly.

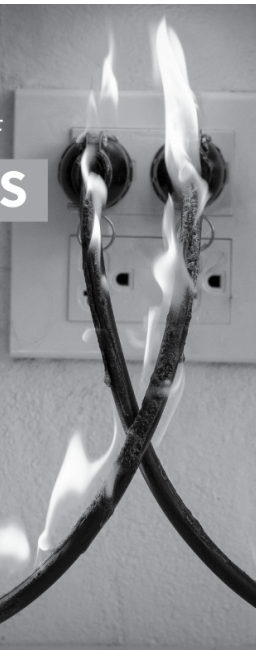


Be sure your **chimney is clear** before each use, and cover your fireplace with a screen to keep children and pets away from flames.

For more **tips on fire prevention**, visit [Safe Electricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

THE MOST COMMON CAUSES OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

- Incorrectly installed wiring
- Overloaded circuits and extension cords
- Defective or improper plugs, switches and outlets
- Misuse or poor maintenance of lighting



[Safe Electricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)



WIN \$25 OFF YOUR ELECTRIC BILL



Each month, Morgan County REA gives two lucky members a chance at a \$25 bill credit, just by reading *Colorado Country Life*. Unfortunately, the two members whose names were hidden in the November issue did not claim their \$25 bill credits. There are two more MCREA member names and their account numbers hidden somewhere in this issue. If you find your name and account number call MCREA member services at 970-867-5688 by January 31 to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill.